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AUTHOR Parr, Carolyn M.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guidebook is to help persons interested in establishing a family day care program in their homes set up a quality learning environment that enhances children's cognitive development through play. Following a literature review showing the importance of play in Piaget's theory of child development, the author describes a neighborhood play-based program initiated by herself and details eight steps needed to establish such a program, i.e.: registering the program, acquiring children for the program, establishing goals, designing interest areas for playful learning, planning special projects, choosing play materials, designing a program evaluation procedure, and planning parent participation. Results of a survey designed to measure interest in the program in the wider community were inconclusive due to a low level of response. As part of an informal study of sociodramatic play, eight children receiving home care were observed for 3 weeks during free play sessions. Observations focused on play theme, props used, and duration of play. Data were used to identify popular play themes for enhancement through caregiver intervention. Prop boxes were developed for spaceship, grocery store, and beauty/barber shop play activities; the contents of each box, made available for 1 week, were described to the children. Provision of prop boxes was found to extend the duration of sociodramatic play. (RH)

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FAMILY DAY CARE: GUIDELINES DESIGNED TO ENHANCE COGNITIVE LEARNING WITHIN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT BASED ON PIAGETIAN THEORY

Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Human and Educational Services
Oakland University

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching in
Early Childhood Education

by

Carolyn M. Parr

Anne Cairns Federlein, Ph.D., Advisor

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Day Care" means caring for children during the time when parents need children cared for. There are a variety of reasons that parents seek out such care for their children ranging from meeting their needs for income or self-expression to allotting time for a respite from the constant daily demands of child rearing. Currently, day care environments are classified into four main categories: (1) "Day Care Centers" where care is provided for the child by a staff and the children meet in a "center" or school; (2) "In-Home Care" where the child is attended to in his own home; (3) "Group Home Care" where care is provided for seven to ten children by more than one caregiver in a home situation; and (4) "Family Day Care" where a caregiver provides for more than one child (up to as many as six) in his/her own home. The description of day care in all of these environments has been gradually changing over the years from providing "custodial care" (which mainly concentrated on meeting the physical and safety needs of the child) to offering that which is referred to as "quality care". Experts on preschool children (Smart, Smart, 1978) described some of the components of quality day care as "giving children good food, planning adequate rest-activity

cycles, designing a safe environment, keeping a steady optimal temperature indoors, keeping children clean and comfortably clothed, providing supervision, cognitive stimulation, opportunities for motor development, social experiences, and encouragement of all types of creativity." (p. 251) It is the purpose of this paper to help other persons interested in establishing "Family Day Care" in their homes to provide a "quality" learning environment that enhances cognitive growth and development through the child's play. The environment and activities in this day care program will be based on developmental Piagetian theory and its relationship to the preschool child.

In the National Day Care Home Study: Family Day Care in The United States (Stevens, 1982) statistics indicated that in 1975 there were more than five million children who spent at least ten hours a week in family day care. This same study (Fosburg, 1981; Singer, 1980; Stallings and Porter, 1980) also provided some important answers to such questions as "What are these children's experiences in family day care likely to be? What are family day care providers like? Is the regulatory status of the home related to caregiver behavior and children's experiences?". The results acknowledged that while children's experiences differed greatly from home to home, the children in "sponsored or regulated" homes (homes either licensed or registered by the state) seemed to be offered more "quality" care than those children placed in "unregulated" ones (those who were neither externally assessed nor had conducted any self assessment prior to operation). The

study also indicated that "sponsored and regulated homes had more stimulating physical environments and nutritional food than did unregulated homes." (p. 62) One factor which seemed to account for this was the influence of more training in early childhood education provided by outside agencies to sponsored and regulated caregivers. This training was "strongly associated with more positive and stimulating caregiver behaviors which parents themselves valued and homes became more potent learning environments." (p. 62) This fact alone (aside from the legal ramifications of operating an unlicensed or unregistered home) would suggest that the opportunity of training in child development afforded caregivers in licensed or registered homes would be beneficial towards the establishment of "quality" in the environment. Finally, the study expressed the desire of most parents to place their children in homes that would supply an environment that was conducive to learning: "... parents preferred an unstructured to a structured environment; one with a mix of ages; and overwhelmingly one that fostered learning." (p. 73) Steven's review of the study concluded that there was "a need for the continued support development of quality home learning environments (rather than quality school learning environments..." (p. 63) However, he did not define what type of learning environment should be established. As a parent, early childhood educator, and family day care provider, it is this author's contention that one needs

to consider the stage of development (not the chronological age) a child is at before deciding how to structure the environment to best suit his needs. After considering that, the caregiver's best option for facilitating true learning in the young child is to create a stimulating and non-threatening play atmosphere.

The psychological functions of play are expressed in the genetic psychology founded by Jean Piaget, who sees play as the expression of and prerequisite for a child's development. He links a certain type of play with each stage of development, and although the rate or age at which various activities may vary from one individual to another, the order in which they appear is always the same. Play is the yardstick of a child's mental development. Y. S. Toureh, professor and author on the subject of play activities and materials for children, states that "play cannot occur just anywhere. It comes about in an environment which is prepared to provide a dynamic setting that we may call a play context. Such a context is made up of the following components: (1) actual space, qualified by its dimensions and content; (2) the individual with his/her experience, resources, and aspirations; (3) pressure from the outside; and (4) adaptability to change." (Toureh, 1980, pg. 10)

Because the children involved in this "Family Day Care Project" are all preschoolers (3-5 years of age) this paper will concentrate on how to provide "quality" care by fostering learning

through play as well as maintaining the traditional values of emotional, physical, and social support for the child. To do so one must be aware of some of the developmental tasks that a normal preschooler attempts to master on a day to day basis: (Ryan, Warren, McFadden, 1979)

1. Physical Developmental Tasks
   To move from the basic large motor skills (walking, running, climbing) to the development of small motor skills which require fine coordination (stringing beads, tying shoes).

2. Emotional Developmental Tasks
   To learn to separate fact from reality; identifying with the same sex parent as a model to be like, and acquiring self esteem which comes from mastering or using objects in a purposeful way.

3. Social Developmental Tasks
   To learn to interact with other children and accept adults other than their parents.

4. Intellectual Developmental Tasks
   To learn basic concepts such as sameness/differences, shapes, colors, and to begin to understand time.

(p. 39)

It is through his/her play that a child works on these developmental tasks. "Quality" family day care homes will allow and encourage this development by providing play opportunities which will result in the child's increased ability to:

1. Develop ideas about the world around him;
2. Learn about feelings;
3. Express his/her feelings;
4. Learn to relate to others;

5. Develop large motor skills;

6. Develop small motor skills;

7. Use and appreciate his/her senses;

8. Learn basic concepts;

9. Learn the meaning of rules. (p. 39)

Each day a child's schedule and environment should try to "provide for outdoor play, free play with other children, games with other children, working with play materials, and an opportunity to do whatever he/she wants, even to sit and daydream." (p. 40)

This project was initiated with three goals in mind:

1. To determine the need and desire in the surrounding community (Rochester, Michigan) for a "Family Day Care Program" based on developmental Piagetian philosophy of learning and its relationship to play and the preschool child. A survey will be designed and run through a community church and local bowling alley nursery. The survey will also try to determine if parents would be willing to pay more for this "quality" care.

2. To design a simple play-based curriculum guide for other caregivers who are interested in providing a similar atmosphere in their homes which would stimulate the preschool child to learn about himself and his environment through playful exploration. This guide includes (a) basic developmental principles concerning cognitive growth (learning) and the preschool child based on Piagetian theory, (b) ideas on physical space, materials, activities, and the role of the caregiver as a facilitator of playful learning, and (c) three forms designed for caregivers to use in their own program. These forms will provide information for the parents ("Daily Activity Sheet"), and information for the caregiver ("Bi-weekly Children Evaluation" and "Yearly Parent Evaluation" forms).

3. The completion of a small "in-house" research study on the sociodramatic play of eight preschool children currently enrolled in a family day care situation on a part-time basis. The research includes observing and recording certain types of play behaviors the children exhibited over an initial three week period without any adult intervention in the play context. Then, the results of observing and recording these same children's play behaviors after some form of intervention by an adult during the following three weeks. This intervention will presumedly enhance and extend the children's play themes. The observations are based on the "Sociodramatic Play Inventory" (Christie, 1982) which includes "six essential elements for sociodramatic play: imitative role play, make-believe in regard to objects, make-believe in regard to actions and situations, interactions, verbal communications, and persistence." (p. 28) Adult intervention will be defined as "outside or inside" based on Smilansky's (1968) sociodramatic play training techniques described by Christie in his article "Sociodramatic Play Training." One of the desired results of this research will be the opportunity for cognitive growth and development through this type of play.

Piagetian theory looks on the child as an explorer and scientist who is constantly trying to manipulate the environment so that he/she can understand it and call it his/her own. Intelligence or cognitive development is the adaptation of the child to the physical, social, and intellectual world. There are many opportunities for the "Pre-operational" child (2-7 years) to act upon and react to his/her environment. It is during this acting and reacting that he/she begins to organize and understand himself/herself and the world around him. Children act and react to their environment most often through play. Caregivers

interested in providing "quality" care can best aid children's development (cognitively and otherwise) by being aware of the importance of play and creating an enriched and diverse environment that will encourage many opportunities for learning through this medium.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In researching this project it is important to keep in mind that the purpose, as stated in the introduction, is to provide a "quality" family day care situation for preschool age children. Part of the definition of "quality" has been defined as "meeting the learning needs of these children by providing a stimulating and non-threatening play environment" that will enhance cognitive growth and development, according to Piaget. At this point it is necessary to review three areas of research: (1) Piagetian Developmental Theory and its relationship to cognitive growth; (2) the importance of play in the development of cognitive growth in the young child and (3) the process involved in developing a "play-based curriculum" designed to foster cognitive growth (learning) in the preschool child (age three to five years).

John L. Phillips, in his book entitled Piaget's Theory: A Primer, states that "the term learning seldom appears in Piaget's writings, and when it does it is nearly always accompanied by a modifier....conditioning and other specific learnings he calls "learning in the narrow sense"; changes in cognitive structure usually are referred to not as "learning in the broad sense" but as "development." (p. 8)

Piaget himself called his theory "constructivist" stating that "the organism (person) inherits a genetic program that gradually (through a process called "maturation") provides the biological equipment necessary for constructing a stable internal structure out of its experiences with the environment. That stable structure - that intelligence - then helps the organism adapt to changes in the environment." (p. 9) Phillips continues on to explain that "possibly the most important difference between Piaget's developmental theory and traditional learning theory is that Piaget's theory recognizes an intermittent revision of established structure -- a process that requires qualitative as well as quantitative change as higher order structures (schemes) incorporate those of an earlier stage. The process by which these structures are revised is called "equilibrium," which is dynamic because it consists of a system of compensating actions by the individual that help him maintain a steady state. This steady state is a condition of a person's system in which the internal activities of the organism completely compensate for intrusions without...the transition from one state to another causes "disequilibrium" and learning occurs as a result." (p. 30)

In simpler terms, in order for a child to "learn" he must be in a biological stage mature enough to take in certain information (process referred to as "assimilation") and then be able to make changes within the way he has structured his thinking or perception about the environment to include this new information (process

referred to as "accommodation"): "The earliest structures are relatively simple and are referred to as reflexes. As a result of assimilation and accommodation the child begins to form a mental framework onto which incoming sensory data may fit...it is the framework that is continually changing its shape so that as many data as possible will fit." (p. 30) Piaget believes that intellectual development is a continual process of organization and reorganization of sturcture, each new organization integrating the previous one into itself. He has chosen to break the total course of development into units referred to as periods or stages. Each of these stages describes best what a child can do at that time, but one should be aware that previously acquired behaviors will occur even though the child will be capable of new and better ones.

Because of this fact, and taking into consideration that this paper is concerned mainly with the preschool age child, although all of the stages of Piaget's growth and development are listed major emphasis will be placed on the first two stages rather than the latter ones. The four major stages of Piagetian Theory are cited and discussed by authors Janelle Thibault and Judy McKee (1982):

Sensorimotor Stage	(Birth - 2 years)
Pre-operational Stage	(2-7 years)
Concrete Operational	(7-11 years)
Formal Operational	(11-15 years)

They elaborate on Piagetian theory stating that: "Children form new patterns of behavior through assimilation and accommodation: taking in information and bending it to fit their own patterns of knowledge and skills." They also suggest that "accommodation requires discrimination on a child's part, occurring when previously held ideas are changed to fit new concepts" and stress that "approximate age levels for each stage represents a mental age not a chronological one." (p. 19) Thibault and McKee devised a simple chart of these stages which further describes the child's activity and the suggested response to this activity by the adult which should help stimulate the cognitive growth in the child during each period of development. Information from the first two stages (Sensorimotor and Preoperational) includes the following:

SENSORIMOTOR STAGE

Age: 1 month

Child Activity: refines innate responses

Adult Response: respond to and stimulate child's senses

Age: 1-4 months

Child Activity: repeats and refines actions which once occurred by chance

Adult Response: stimulate senses by using objects which the child can interact with (rattles, bells, mobiles, etc.)

Age: 4-10 months

Child Activity: manipulate objects, repeat actions by choice, develop object permanence

Adult Response: provide toys with various shapes, textures and colors, hide a toy while child watches

Age: 10-12 months

Child Activity: combines previous activities for new results, begins to imitate

Adult Response: provide toys (familiar dolls, balls, boxes), encourage imitation

Age: 12-18 months

Child Activity: experiment with objects to discover new uses, locate object with eyes and track it

Adult Response: provide experience with sand, water, textures, toys that can be manipulated to turn, nest, roll, open and close

Age: 18-24 months

Child Activity: practices deferred imitation, applies new skills in old ways

Adult Response: provide peer contact and interaction along with the opportunity to apply old skills to new experiences.

PREOPERATIONAL STAGE

Age: 2-7 years

Child Activity: language appears, imaginative play, deferred imitation. egocentrism prevelant, can complete simple operations but can't explain why

Adult Response: provide dolls, cars, blocks, crayons, paper, scissors, books, music and musical instruments to play with, talk at child's level or above, allow experiences with liquid, mass, and length informally, encourage decision making when possible.

(p. 20 Table I)

The authors point out that "It is during the last two sub-stages of the Sensorimotor period that the child's curiosity leads to creative discoveries in the environment ... through deferred imitation the child will find the cat food in the cupboard, feed the cat, say No! to the doll, and try to cut the dog's hair..." (p. 21) During this Sensorimotor period the child mainly uses his physical self (muscles and senses) to respond to the environment. When language emerges as a system of representation during the Preoperational period the child gains the ability to complete simple mental operations (e.g. classifying) although he/she cannot usually explain the process involved in such action. At the same time the Preoperational child is described by Piaget as being very "egocentric" in the sense that "he thinks that everyone else has the same thoughts, experiences, actions, and reactions that he does." (p. 23) It is most important that anyone caring for the preschool age child to understand this fact and realize that it is through the child's exposure to other adults and children that he gradually comes to discover points of view other than his own. The adult may facilitate this process in many ways. One of the most noted play studies conducted (Smilansky, 1968) showed how disadvantaged preschool children were helped by adult intervention into their imaginative play: "Smilansky observed that until about three, a child imitates small pieces of his parents' (and other significant adults' behavior), expressing his identification with them through dramatic play...Sociodramatic play is born of the

understanding that people react to each other and interact with each other...the child needs other children, for now he wants to imitate both actions and reactions.. inadequate sociodramatic play may be found among children who are not dealing competently with the social demands they are facing (they are not "decentering" or becoming less egocentric)... Training in sociodramatic play was followed by increases in communication...with positive effects upon problem solving and comprehension of social roles and perspectives..." (Smart, Smart, 1978, p. 155-156).

Other research supports Smilansky's findings that training in play may result in greater growth and development in the young child. Christie (1982) listed some of these studies: "...direct training and results showed that it led to significant improvements in verbal I.Q. (Saltz, Dixon, Johnson, 1977), creative thinking (Feitelson, and Ross, 1973), social role conservation (Fink, 1976), group problem solving ability (Rosen, 1974) and language usage (Lovinger, 1974) —— Review of Literature (Christie, 1980). Further discussion of the caregiver's role as a facilitator of the preschool child's play will be discussed in the following chapters.

As a final note concerning Piagetian development, caregivers should be aware that in comparison to the Sensorimotor stage (where the child is limited to direct interaction with the environment) the Preoperational period allows the child to manipulate symbols that represent his environment. However, if

you compare this Preoperational stage child to an adult his thought is still quite different than an adult. Phillips (1981) explored the limitations of preoperational thought under six headings:

> "1. Concreteness: compared to the sensorimotor child, the behavior of the preoperational child is relatively independent of sensory motor input; compared to the adult he is still very concrete with his thinking dominated by his perceptions and images. (p. 82)
>
> 2. Irreversability: failure to conserve substance (e.g. can't understand that if liquid is poured into a tall glass and then transferred to another glass that is shorter you still have the same amount of liquid and only the container has changed...he/she will focus on the taller container as having more liquid). (p. 86)
>
> 3. Egocentrism: he/she thinks everyone's perceptions of the world are the same as his/her own. (p. 88)
>
> 4. Centering: tends to center his attention on one detail of an event and hence he has an inability to process information from other aspects of the situation. (p. 89)
>
> 5. State vs. Transformation: the child is unable to integrate a series of states or conditions into a coherent whole (e.g. ask him to visualize a stick falling and he is only able to see the stick standing and the stick laying down...no state of falling in between), (p. 90)
>
> 6. Transductive Reasoning: transitional between the concept of causality and the reasoning adult is this preconceptual reasoning stage (e.g. my daddy needs hot water to shave at the sink... hot water at the sink means my daddy will shave). (p. 91-93)"

These limitations must be considered by caregivers of preoperational stage children in order for them to establish a developmentally appropriate learning environment. Persons

providing "quality" care must understand how children are constantly constructing and reconstructing their world along a developmental path and will create an appropriate environment in which the child will discover the world in his/her own way. More to the point, Piaget himself states "children have an understanding only of that which they invent themselves, and each time we try to teach something too quickly, we keep them from reinventing it themselves." (Thibault, McKee, 1982, p. 27)

Piaget's work has influenced early childhood educators to accept the value of play in cognitive development. His studies (largely performed on his own children) show that through play children come to understand and master their environment (the level of mastery related, of course, to their age and stage of development). Well known educators and authors on child development Mollie and Russell Smart (1978) in their chapter on development in cognition, imagination, and language discuss the value of play for the young child as opposed to the older person: "Older children and adults can separate work from play, thinking from talking, and reasoning from pretending, but young children are less differentiated. They react more globally, more as wholes. Their mode of operation has a strong imaginative component that operates in concert with language and controlled thought. Children do much of their problem solving through play." (p. 79)

In another chapter they refer to playful activity as "the way children organize experiences and cognitive abilities so that

they generate a variety of ideas...play facilitates cognitive, imaginative, and adaptive behavior." (p. 97) Authors Butler, Gots, and Quisenberry concur with the previously mentioned developmentalist viewpoint concerning the importance of play and discuss it thoroughly in their book Play As Development. "Piaget provides us with a cognitive theory of play...the value of play to the life of a child can be measured in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor terms...the most obvious and easily acceptable is its value to physical development. It is easy to see physical skills develop in a child as a result of practicing running, skipping, hopping, etc. It is not as easy to see such development in the cognitive and affective areas..." (p. 14) Although cognitive development may be harder to measure it may be seen in a variety of play situations involving the preoperational stage child. Actually it is found most often when preschoolers are involved in imaginative play: "In its simplest form, imagination consists of representing some part of outer reality by an inner image...without the ability to use images as representations, man would forever stay in the sensorimotor stage of intellectual development...pretending involves the use of objects and transforming them into something else (e.g. pretending a block is a cup)...the more mature a child becomes the more transformations one will see in his play...around four years. Children sustain long periods of pretend play that require many transformations... as mental growth continues through symbolic play as well as

other experiences, egocentrism gives way to objectivity..." (Smart, Smart, 1978, p. 99-100)

Developmentalists organize the stages of play under three major headings: (Thibault, McKee, 1982)

1. Sensorimotor Play: the earliest form (practice play) of play where the infant uses his muscles to repeat actions and imitate...new action/ imitation/ new action...it is repetitive action usually without materials.

2. Productive Play: (2-4 years) play where the child uses simple and manageable materials to satisfy their own purposes. Play is used for child's own ends rather than as a means of accomplishing some result...as children become more skillful at managing materials, they do begin to construct things.

3. Reproductive Play: (4-7 years) children progressively use play materials and perform actions in more conventional ways...in contrast to productive play (which is productive of whatever the child intends). This play is increasingly reproductive of what the child understands about physical and social realms of experience...this period is also referred to as the dramatic/ sociodramatic play period...

   Dramatic: described as the time the child plays alone using only materials and his/her own imagination.

   Sociodramatic: described as play when another child is involved.

The type of play that this project is concerned with enhancing involves mainly the productive and reproductive play areas. Ways to facilitate this type of play in the home and discussed in the Caregiver's Guide located in the appendices.

In an overview of different approaches to play throughout various societies J. Roabe (1980) states that "depending on the type of society a child is in play may or may not be an integral part of education, it is accepted and encouraged or alternately rejected as an obstacle to a citizen's productive capacity... whatever society's attitude to children's games may be, they nonetheless play an important part in children's education...it may be said that play is an education itself outside of school. Educators cannot turn a blind eye to the possibilities afforded by play activities. Even in antiquity and during the Renaissance, philosophers stressed the value of play." (p. 8) Later on she describes how "technical know-how and knowledge in general are transmitted through play...a child deprived of the first rudiments of knowledge that it brings him would be incapable of learning anything at school, and would be irreparably cutoff from both his natural and social environment...when a child plays it is his initiation into adult behavior, into the role he will be called upon to play in subsequent life, he develops his physical, verbal and intellectual capacities and his ability to communicate." (p. 14)

Because it is so valuable the adult (caregiver) must learn how to facilitate the child's play. Butler, Gots, Quisenberry (1978) insist that "for play to have value, it must be supported by materials, guidance from parents, teachers or caregivers, and adequate basic experiences...interaction with others is as

important as interaction with objects in the environment...play activities provide the opportunity for children to try out what they have learned so that problem solving can take place spontaneously." (p. 20-21) One must be careful however that in facilitating play for the child one does not "take over" the child's creation. "When an adult interfers in a game as an adult, it is no longer the child's game...it is essential to grasp the fact that the function of play is self-learning...adults can do no more than encourage play groups, reply to whatever questions the children ask spontaneously while playing, have a store of materials they are likely to ask for...exchanging views with children and prompting them to experiment with their own theories about things and human beings is an art for which there is no recipe." (p. 19)

Having first cited Piaget's important contributions to the understanding of child development and then acknowledging the value of play and its contribution to such development, this paper will now concentrate on how to establish an in-home curriculum that will support the play needs of the preschool child. A process involving three logical steps was used in the development of this curriculum: (1) The definition of goals; (2) The arrangement and design of the physical environment; (3) The acquisition of materials that help children to achieve these goals. The implementation of the curriculum and the method used for evaluation is discussed in Chapter III and will not be dealt with here.

Also, the description of environment and suggested materials will be brief in this section because a more involved description is found in both Chapter III and the Caregiver's Guide (see Appendices).

The value and goals of this "quality" Family Day Care Program are based on some of those found in the open-framework approach to curriculum development (developed by David Weikart in the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation Program) and discussed in Gail Halliwell's article "Open-Framework Approaches to Developing Programs for Early Childhood Education." (1977) The framework "emphasizes the initiation of educational experiences by both adults and children. Child development and individuality are considered when planning the key experiences which form the basis for the child's later development and learning." (p. 1) These goals stress the importance attached to the personal integrity of the child, and the need for children to freely and actively explore the environment. The educational goals for this cognitively oriented curriculum include development of:

1. The child's ability to make decisions about what he is going to do and how he is going to do it.
2. The child's ability to work cooperatively with other children and adults.
3. The child's ability to use a variety of skills in the arts, physical movement, and knowledge of objects.
4. The child's ability to express himself through speaking and drama.

5. The child's ability to apply the reasoning capacity he has developed in a wide range of naturally occurring situations with a wide variety of materials.

6. A spirit of inquiry and openness to knowledge and points of view of others. (p. 14)

This project is based on the assumption that although a child's growth through the developmental stages cannot be accelerated, his cognitive structures can be enriched through experiences. "Quality" in day care will incorporate the above goals into the following suggested experiences derived through Piagetian Theory: (Halliwell, 1977)

"1. Active Learning: a necessary condition for cognitive restructuring and hence for development...it is the manipulation, transforming, and combining of materials... acquiring skills through manipulation of tools and equipment.

2. Language: one part of the process by which children understand and represent relationships among objects (e.g. talking about experiences and describing things and feelings).

3. Classification: providing opportunities to discover sameness and differences.

4. Seriation: providing opportunities to discover the concepts of size (large to small).

5. Time: providing opportunity to deal with the continuity of time (usually done by making the child aware of the passage of time...perhaps by following a daily but flexible routine schedule the child learns to anticipate what comes next and approximately how long the "wait" will be.)

6. Feelings: providing the opportunity for problem solving and for dealing with consequences in his/her relationships with others..." (p. 15)

Having defined the goals and the broad range of experiences that playful activities might include, it is now time to turn one's attention to the home environment in Family Day Care. Developmental theory concerning "learning environments" (based on principles of both developmental theorists Piaget and Erikson) is described as follows: (Halliwell, 1977)

"1. Learning environments must be planned to enrich and extend behavior within the developmental stage of the children.

2. Learning environments must encourage the children to initiate interactions, this could be termed as active learning.

3. Learning environments must allow for interactions at the level best suited to each child.

4. Learning environments should involve planning in personality and cognitive development... both are important and ought to be considered co-jointly for a child interacts, and therefore learns as a whole person..." (p. 20)

Designing the home learning environment will depend on both the attitude of the caregiver and the physical structure of the home. It is this author's contention that if the adult is truly convinced in the value of play he/she will arrange areas in the home (no matter how small) that will reflect the developmental principles. Briefly stated, an environment appropriate for the preschool child should include as many of the following

suggestions as is possible:

1. Establishment of Interest Centers: places where children engage in activities that challenge them and promote increased satisfaction and mastery... (a) climbing area, (b) sand and water play area, (c) art activity area, (d) home area, (3) block construction area, (f) reading and quiet table toy area.

2. Establishment of a Routine: where children can anticipate certain events. It may include four of the following: (a) child initiated activity where he/she decides what he/she is going to do, (b) planned activity available at certain times during the day, (c) meal and snack times at regular intervals, and (d) a clean up procedure that includes:

    - putting away toys and materials in spots designated for them.
    - the washing of face and hands whenever necessary.

3. Establishment of a Daily Program: one which encourages interaction with the physical environment and people in the environment. This may include things such as:

    - the use of open-ended questions to draw a child into an activity
    - describing things to the child if he can't yet do it himself
    - encouraging the child verbally to express his feelings and observations and, also, to have fun with language.

4. Establishment of a Method: which encourages a child to plan what he is going to do that day. It should include alternative selections for play and an opportunity for his "play selection" to be extended by the caregiver. Ways to go about this are found in Caregiver's Guide. (See Appendices)

5. Establishment of Behavior Rules: which will assist in resolving conflicts. This should include things such as: (a) limits that are enforced consistently, (b) positive rather

than negative approach to discipline and (c) an attitude on the part of the caregiver that chooses to help a child find "acceptable alternatives" to any action deemed undesirable or unacceptable.

In conclusion, one should remember that it is the adult and the attitude he/she has toward children that will make a program like this either meaningful or meaningless. Clare Cherry in her book Creative Play for the Developing Child reminds us that for a program to work "consideration is given to the needs of the adult as well as the child...essential to such attitudes is honesty because with honesty there can be freedom...freedom not as a license to do just anything but it means that children are given play environments in which options are available...they can make choices as to what they want to do, how long they want to do it, whether they want to do it fast or slow, alone or with another person...as long as they are considerate to other people they do not always have to conform...they are encouraged to be inventive, innovative, and creative." (p. 6-7). "Quality" Family Day Care Programs encompass this attitude because they believe in children and their ability to develop in a relaxed playful atmosphere.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

A practicum, defined by Webster in Webster's New World Dictionary, is "a session (period of time) emphasizing the partial application of theory...one in which a student gains practical experience in a field of study." The major thrust of this project has been the establishment of "quality" Family Day Care based on the application of developmental Piagetian Theory using a play-based curriculum for learning in the preschool child. This chapter involves discussion concerning three main areas of involvement in the practicum: (1) the process involved in establishing the program in the home, (2) the process involved in the development and distribution of a survey to determine the need for and possible support of such a day care learning program in the community and, (3) the process involved in the application of current research concerning the possibility of enhancing sociodramatic play in preschool children.

DESCRIPTION OF DAY CARE HOME

Before describing the program that was established it should benefit the reader to understand how the area of Family Day Care came to be important in the lives of my children and myself. Basically, as a parent who had both a year old infant and a four

year old child who needed part-time care, I preferred Family Day Care because my infant needed more attention than most center programs could offer. I located a mother who was involved in running a very limited day care service. She preferred to have children on a part-time basis and chose only to care for three children at a time. Her own children were grown and she had decided to try Family Day Care because she loved having children around. She did not plan a formal program but because she liked children she let them participate in many "fun activities" within reasonable limits. Unfortunately, because of a job transfer, she moved out of state and I was left with finding another caregiver that the children and I would be comfortable with. This turned out to be a difficult task as all the "good" sitters were filled with children and the rest were unsuitable for a variety of reasons ranging from the fact that they watched too many children at one time (so that they were unable to do anything other than supervise them watching television) to the fact that there were either not enough toys or the playthings were so old and dirty that I couldn't in good conscience leave my children there for any length of time. This, coupled with the knowledge that I knew of other parents who were also looking for a "good" sitter, led me to develop the idea of providing a quality family day care program within my own home. There were eight steps involved in the implementation of this program: (1) registration of my home with

the State of Michigan, (2) acquisition of children for the program, (3) establishing goals for the program, (4) designing interest areas for playful learning within the home, (5) planning special projects, (6) choosing play materials, (7) designing an evaluation procedure for the program, and (8) deciding how the parents were to be involved in the program. Each of these steps is described in greater detail as follows.

Registration

In the State of Michigan a process known as registration has replaced the licensing procedure. In order to register one's home for a day care a person must write or call the Michigan Department of Social Services. Following the contact a rule book entitled Licensing Rules for Family Day Care Homes is sent along with a cover letter that explains "it is required by Act No. 116 P.A. 1973 as amended that you be registered if you engage in child care. This registration would allow you to provide day care for children unrelated to you in your home..." There is no fee for registration, however, you must provide the State with some information about yourself and your home before the decision to register you can be made. The information packet that is sent includes the following:

1. Act No. 116, P.A. 173 as amended (Child Care Law)
2. Family Day Care Home Rules
3. Explanation of Family Day Care Home Registration

4. Three reference letters

5. Registration form

"Registration" is the process by which the Michigan Department of Social Services regulates day care homes. The process requires that a family day care home provider certify in writing to the Department that they and their home are in compliance with the Family Day Care Home Rules. The registration process includes (a) reading all the material in the initial packet, (b) considering each of the rules (listed below) and determining if you meet them, (c) completing three requirements prior to an orientation meeting...bringing in completed reference letters, having a T.B. test for self and any person in home over fourteen years of age, completed registration form, (d) attending an orientation session that lasts approximately two hours during which caregivers receive resource packets that may be helpful in caring for children.

The rules begin by defining the role of the caregiver and his/her job. It discusses the acceptable ratio of adult to child (one adult to six children in this program), the recommended daily routine, the type of discipline to be used (no corporal punishment!), type of equipment needed, food that should be offered and how often, health considerations, rules for administering medication, and general environment considerations including amount of space needed per child (35 square feet indoor and not less than 400 square feet outside or near home premises). Also reviewed are food handling procedures, sanitation considerations,

exits, hazardous materials, and health records.

Acquisition of Children

The initial set of children enrolled in the program came from three sources: (a) three children from the family day care home that I had been using previously, (b) preschool children who were friends of my daughter, and (c) neighborhood children whose mothers were interested in occasional "drop-in" sitting. Since beginning the project, five more "drop-in" children have been added to the list and although they do not come every week they do attend quite frequently. On the whole these children are younger than the established group of preschoolers who average around four years of age. Due to "word of mouth" about the quality of the program it has been necessary to turn away eight other children who needed part-time care on a regular basis.

Establishing Goals and Values

The value and goals of this "quality" Family Day Care Program are based on some of those found in the open-framework approach to curriculum development (developed by David Weikart in the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation Program) and discussed in Gail Halliwell's article "Open-Framework Approaches to Developing Programs for Early Childhood Education." (1977) The framework "emphasizes the initiation of educational experiences by both adults and children. Child development and individuality are considered when planning the key experiences which form the basis for the child's later development and learning." (p. 1) These

goals stress the importance attached to the personal integrity of the child, and the need for children to freely and actively explore the environment. The educational goals for this cognitively oriented curriculum include development of:

1. The child's ability to make decisions about what he is going to do and how he is going to do it.
2. The child's ability to work cooperatively with other children and adults.
3. The child's ability to use a variety of skills in the arts, physical movement, and knowledge of objects.
4. The child's ability to express himself through speaking and drama.
5. The child's ability to apply the reasoning capacity he has developed in a wide range of naturally occurring situations with a wide variety of materials.
6. A spirit of inquiry and openness to knowledge and points of view of others. (p. 14)

Interest Centers

Interest centers are those areas both in and out of the home that are designed to encourage the children to play. The following "Interest Centers" are based on ideas suggested by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Eisenberg, 1977, p. 12-15). In this particular home program the house is a 2600 square foot Quad Level. The main floor contains a large living/dining area and good size kitchen/breakfast Nook (see pictures). The upper level contains three bedrooms that are off-limits to all of the children except my own. The lower level has a very

large rectangular family room, a full bathroom, and den with a walk-out doorwall to the backyard. The basement is divided into a paneled and carpeted playroom, a laundry and a workroom (both of which are also off-limits to the children). The "Interest Centers" for the program are located in five areas of the home:

Playroom

a. Housekeeping center: Area where children can role play familiar and imaginative experiences... includes child size stove, sink, refrigerator, table, chairs, dishes, pots, pans, dress-up clothes.

b. Block center: Place where children create and build on a large and small scale...located in the back of the room away from high traffic area.

c. Doll house center: Area where children can role play with a tremendous feeling of power...includes small people, doll house furniture, trucks and cars along with one large doll house, a Fisher Price "Village" set, a "Sesame Street Club-House" set and a "Disney Land Castle." These items are located close to the block area so that equipment may be combined with block construction. These items are also allowed to be taken to the family room and used on the hearth by the fireplace.

Family Room

a. Music center: Equipment is brought out and children use open space at the end of the room for dancing, expressive movement, playing instruments...it is located away from housekeeping and block area. Equipment includes drums, triangles, bells, and maracas.

b. Manipulation center: Area that is located on the small children's table or low square coffee table and is supplied with toys that enhance small motor coordination (dominoes pegs, puzzles, beads to string and games).

c. Gymnastic center: Area where the children are able to exercise and "work-off" excess energy. Equipment includes a mini-jogger trampoline, a portable slide, gym mat for tumbling, and the stairs for jumping. It should be noted that these activities must be supervised closely and, therefore, are available on a more limited basis.

d. Book center: Located near the couch for comfort.

e. Rest center: Area on the couches where children may take a "quiet time" if they need it. Other children play in playroom or kitchen if they do not choose to rest.

Kitchen

a. Science/Math center: An area to learn about nature and to begin to acquire a few math concepts. It includes use of geometric shapes (cookie cutters), clock, thermometer, measuring cups, funnels, cooking opportunities...water, play-do, baby bathtub filled alternatively with beans, sand, water, snow, etc. Also available is a children's microscope, plants to care for, and goldfish to feed.

b. Art center: An area where the child can express thoughts, ideas, and feelings through various mediums...it needs:
   - good lighting
   - close location to sink
   - floor and table that are easily cleaned

   Materials might include paint, brushes, portable easels (made out of sturdy cardboard folded in the shape of a tent), glue, paste, markers, yarn, scissors, collage supplies, paper, play-do, shaving cream, starch.

Den

Computer center: An area where the children are invited (two at a time) to play with an ATARI 800 computer. They may choose from a variety of games or preschool educational disks which promote learning in areas such as letter recognition, eye-hand coordination and patience in waiting to take their turn.

Outside

> Open play yard: An area immediately surrounding the home and a "common ground area" (shared by the whole subdivision) that is adjacent to the backyard. A large cement patio in the back accommodates small riding and push toys...the "Commons" provides a large expanse of land for running, playing ball and kite flying... area also includes a natural wood climbing apparatus and swing. (See pictures)

Daily Routine

The establishment of a daily routine is important to preschool children and the adult who cares for them. Hayson (1982) notes studies that confirm this view: "Both children and adults benefit from knowing what to expect and what is expected of them (Freudenberger, 1977). Sometimes simple changes in a room will provide enough information about these expectations (Pines and Maslock, 1980)...a daily schedule, definite transition routines, and clear statement of the rules help reduce uncertainty without destroying the spontaneity of a good early childhood program..." (p. 29) Establishment of the daily routine in this program involved designing a "Daily Activity Sheet" that is sent home with every child when he is picked up. Basically, the sheet lists what the child was observed participating in from the moment he arrived until it was time to leave. Each day includes a morning free play session, morning snack, lunch, planned activity (which child may or may not choose to participate in), afternoon free play, and afternoon snack (see Appendix). There is space on the sheet for the caregiver to list any further observations about the child's behavior that the parent might find interesting or useful. The

use of this sheet has proved particularly successful in this program in generating communication between the parents and the caregiver. Aside from the fact that the parents enjoy knowing exactly what their child has done during the day (it gives them more concrete information than the usual preschool child's response "I just played today."), it also provides a review sheet for the child as to what he did that day and therefore encourages more meaningful conversation between parent and child at the end of a busy day. Very often positive comments on the child's behavior during a particular day (e.g. he participated in clean-up without being asked...) seemed to stimulate continued positive behavior when the child came again. Further guidelines (Eisenberg, 1977) for establishing a smooth routine for preschoolers include:

1. Not rearranging rooms too often because this age group needs the security of knowing where things are and where they belong.

2. Teaching children where things are kept, differentiating what they are free to use and what is to be used only with supervision.

3. Allowing time for clean-up in the schedule and referring to each interest area by name which adds to the child's understanding, vocabulary, familiarity, and further independence.

4. Clearly defining interest areas while remembering that wide open spaces encourage rough-housing and running.

5. Remembering that children need privacy... provide areas to climb in and look out...a place a child can go to read or be alone (under a table, in a box...)

Planned Activity

Constance Kamii (1978), child development researcher and educator who studied Piagetian Theory at the University of Geneva, has done a great deal of curriculum research with teachers to find ways of fostering growth in young children's thinking. She emphasizes that "Piaget makes a distinction between physical manipulation and logico-mathematical manipulation when a child is engaged in an activity...through physical manipulation the child gets knowledge about physical properties of an object which are observable...refers to this as 'action on an object'...through logico-mathematical manipulation the child introduces organization or a relationship to an object, which has almost nothing to do with its physical properties...an example is when a child divides pennies among his friends...it is the division not the object of division that becomes the important aspect of learning that is occurring..." (p. 4) She points out that it is not the manipulation as such that is important but the thinking that goes along with the manipulation that makes manipulation indispensable for a child's intellectual development. Because of this fact she suggests certain "perspectives" for all teachers (caregivers) to keep in mind when they encourage children in planned activities for learning:

> "1. The importance of not talking too much...often we interfere with a child's thinking by asking too many questions (Is it big? Is it small? What shape is it?) and very often the things which are of interest to the adult are of very little interest to the child..,

2. There are different ways that children act on objects. One is when children act physically on an object to get scientific knowledge. Another is to act on an object to see how it will react. Finally, acting on an object to produce a desired result...the intention is already in the child's mind. The child will do more thinking if there is some effort they are interested in producing (something to build up or knock down, make out of art materials, etc.).

3. Teacher intervention at the right time to extend a planned activity is important.

4. It is important to "teach" many things with one activity rather than one thing with one activity. (Note: This is why more 'open-ended' play materials are more valuable in any learning program.)"(p. 6-7)

In conclusion, any activity that a caregiver plans for preschoolers should be based on the natural growth and development of the child. There are many sources available that offer appropriate suggestions for "open-ended" preschool activities which are easily adapted into a home situation. One of the best sources used in this program are a group of paperback books that come in a box called The Idea Box (copyright 1973) published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Washington, D.C.). Some of the topics include: creating environments that stimulate learning, homemade and improvised equipment, food planning and menus, teaching with nature, science experiences with living things, teaching with food, learning with water, dirt, mud and sand...things to do on rainy days, holidays, and other days...and finally, a teacher's cookbook that includes many different recipes for finger paints, play-do, crayons, etc.

Play Materials

"One way to encourage a child to play is through the careful choice of toys and play materials...The following criteria provides for selection of toys and materials that encourage and stimulate play rather than hampering the child's inclination to play creatively..." (Butler, Gots, Quisenberry, 1978, p. 117-124):

"1. Interest:
   a. How attractive is the toy?
   b. How many different ways can the toy be used... look for simple things that can be used in a variety of ways?

2. Adaptability:
   Will the material adapt to more than one purpose, more than one child, more than one age level? (e.g. riding toys, blocks, paints)

3. Safety:
   Does the material comply with safety standards... is it fairly unbreakable, have non-toxic paint, free of sharp edges and detachable parts, easily cleaned? If item is hazardous will it be used only with supervision? (e.g. saw, hammer)

4. Sturdiness:
   Will the toy withstand the use a child will make of it...a safe prediction is that some misuse will occur...anything big enough to be sat on should be sturdy enough to hold a child.

5. Toys That Encourage Large And Small Muscle Motor Development:
   A program needs some riding toys, push and pull toys, balls, to encourage large muscle development. It also needs blocks, rings on a cone, peg boards, puzzles, and art materials etc. to encourage small muscles to develop.

6. Toys That Strengthen Social Relationships with Others:
   This would include things such as blocks, housekeeping furniture and accessories, dolls, dress-up clothes...

7. Toys That Build Competencies for Living in the World:
Will the material build a variety of understanding at the child's level...some materials need to be selected to stimulate cognitive development (books, puzzles, magnifying glasses, magnets, fish tanks, terrariums...).

8. Toys That Arouse Imagination and Creative Thinking:
Will the material stimulate and encourage creative ideas? (e.g. blocks, paint, clay, sand, and water)."

After selecting play materials for the day care program caregivers should remember that materials need to be provided in sufficient quantity to encourage freedom of use. Also, adult guidance in relation to use of the material must be facilitating rather than directed. And finally, the younger a preschool child, the more difficulty he has in choosing and having too many toys or activities available at one time may result in him being unable to choose something and stick with it for any length of time. It is also important to note that materials used in a program such as this come from many sources and do not necessarily have to be store-bought. Toys and materials for this program came from other parents, friends of the caregiver, garage sales, lumber yard, stores (packing cartons and other throw-aways), and my own children.

Evaluation of Curriculum

Sinclair (1979) expressed a multidimensional definition of curriculum and considered it in terms of:

"a. Expressed:
Consists of the written statement of goals, objectives, techniques, and learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures.

b. Implied:
Consists of "hidden curriculum" which consists of unstated messages and unintended learning.

c. Emergent:
Derived from examining the needs of children, includes ongoing alterations, adjustments, and additions to the expressed and implied curriculum." (p. 5-6)

This project includes both an expressed (see Chapter II) and implied (see Caregiver's Guide in Appendix) curriculum as described above. The emergent curriculum is the result of adjustments that are made weekly (if not daily) due to (1) caregiver's observations, (2) parental recommendations, and (3) children's expressed desires for change. (See Bi-Weekly Children's Evaluation in Appendix) Initially, there were many changes (particularly in the physical arrangement of the environment) until both the children and caregiver were comfortable.

Parent Involvement

The parents are involved in this Family Day Care in four ways:

1. They supply basic art materials on a regular basis. Every three months they contribute paste, tape, water paint, markers etc. that are put into a community art box that all the children use.

2. They establish with the caregiver any particular short term goals they would like to see their child attain (e.g. tying shoes).

3. They contribute salvageable throwaway items. (e.g. old pots and pans, dress-up clothes...)

4. They formally evaluate the program on a yearly basis.

SURVEY RESULTS

After initiating the program within the immediate neighborhood successfully, an attempt was made to determine whether or not the rest of the community of Rochester, Michigan might support this type of "quality" Family Day Care. It was anticipated that the design and distribution of a simple one page survey inquiring as to what type of day care is currently preferred by parents of pre-schoolers (see Appendix) would support not only the notion that this type of program is desired but also that it would be supported financially at least as well as "Center Programs." Unfortunately, the results were too inadequate to either support or reject such ideas.

Five hundred surveys were passed out in the surrounding community over a two week period. Three hundred were attached to a Church Bulletin at St. John Fisher Chapel while the remaining two hundred were distributed through the babysitting/nursery program at the North Hill Bowling Lanes. After two weeks only a total of thirty-three forms were returned. Of those who responded six families didn't have any children in the preschool age group while the remaining twenty-seven had at least one preschool age child. Of this group fifteen children are currently enrolled in "Center Programs" while five other participate in "Family Day Care" (all of them part-time). The remaining six children currently spend all of their time at home with a parent. Those parents who

preferred a play-oriented learning program added up to twenty-three with the other four choosing a more academically-oriented learning environment. Of those settings preferred for their children, eight desired a home - one stating reasons for such preference as "more convenient, like extended family, more loving, not as impersonal, more personal attention for the child...kids in school long enough!" Sixteen parents opted for a school or "center" situation supporting their choice with reasons that included "...it is someplace different than home, schools hold the attention of the child and provide a more stimulating atmosphere, it prepares them for real school, the kids adjust easier in school setting, they learn more at school and it is a nice break from home routine, it prepares the child for life outside the home..." It must be noted, however, that three of the families preferred a combination of both home and center care stating generally that the younger the child the more they preferred a home setting. Finally, results as to how well the proposed "quality" Family Day Care would be monetarily supported indicated that eight families would be willing to pay between $1.50 to $2.00 per hour (the standard babysitting rate for the area). Nine parents stated a willingness to support between $2.00 to $2.50 per hour for more quality in a home program (the standard rate for most nursery school programs). Only two families indicated they might support between $2.25 - $2.50 per hour while another two claimed they would definitely support over $2.50 per hour for such a family day care service. Six families did not

respond to this question.

The results of the survey indicate certain problems which if corrected might produce a more valid assessment of need for this type of program in the community. Further consideration should be given to the fact that:

1. The language on the survey form may have been too "dry" to illicit much response.

2. The distribution of the form was not conducive to receiving replies due to the fact that response depended on people's ability to remember to return the completed sheet a week later.

3. The form didn't differentiate parent's preferences if they were considering care on a full-time as opposed to part-time basis.

As a consequence of the poor response, it is recommended that (1) the form be revised, and (2) the form be distributed in such a way that immediate response is encouraged. These results may also lend doubt as to whether or not the survey was the best method, in this instance, to determine need or support for the program. The very fact that children had to be turned away because the program was full indicates that there is a need for "quality" family day care. Perhaps, the distribution of a brochure describing the program available would illicit more of an initial response with the "word of mouth network" supplying the rest of the support.

SOCIODRAMATIC PLAY STUDY

Sociodramatic play is described by Christie (1982) as "play that occurs when two or more children adopt roles and try to recreate a real life situation...Piaget classified this play into three categories that correspond to different stages of cognitive development: Practice Play (birth to two years), Symbolic Play (two to seven years), and Games With Rules Play (seven to eleven years)..." Within this system sociodramatic play is the most highly developed form of symbolic play.

Current evidence supports the fact that sociodramatic play has very important benefits for children. Griffing, Fein (1981) state that this type of play includes "symbolic activity with cognitive complexity in its organization consisting of related ideas and events rather than isolated pretend behaviors...it involves social interaction and verbal communication with other children, taking roles and carrying them out...the duration of this play is the degree of persistence, interests and involvement in acting out familiar events in their lives...the content of the play as well as its form will provide clues not only about a child's interest but about their understanding of concepts expressed..." (p. 13)

This practicum on Family Day Care included a small research study on the sociodramatic play of eight preschool children. Each of the children attended the programs at least two days a week with the exception of one child who was in attendance four

out of five days a week. The study was conducted informally using only the caregiver's observation sheet (see Appendix) as criteria to support researcher's contentions that adults can extend and enhance this type of play in children.

The methodology involved a two-step procedure conducted over a six week period. The first step involved three weeks of observation on the children during free play sessions without any type of intervention or encouragement from an adult. The children were observed in groups with concentration on each child lasting ten to fifteen minutes. The observations were recorded for each child on an observation sheet which included what the play theme consisted of, what props were used, and the duration of the play. This data was then used to determine which of the play themes were the most popular and what type of intervention would be the most appropriate.

The second step of the study was initiated at the beginning of the fourth week. It involved using three of the favorite themes of the children (spaceship, store, beauty/barber shop) and expanding them with indirect input from the adult. The intervention used was based on the results of a study discussed by Griffing, Fein (1981): "Research noted that four and five year olds develop themes and roles more extensively when the content of play was more familiar...one teacher observed children trying to play 'spaceship' very often but theme lasted only a short period

of time...books, stories, and discussion helped the children to acquire greater understanding of the theme...making a few suggestions during the play as to what astronauts might do and adding a few relevant props resulted in enriched play...the intervention was highly successful because the choice of theme was originated by the children..." (p. 15) Using the "theme approach," prop boxes were developed and made available to the children during this three week period (one theme per week). The following items were supplied for each theme:

Grocery Store

Props: empty food containers
toy cash register
play money
masking tape and marker (to mark prices)
old checkbook and blank paper
two play grocery carts
baby scale (for weighing items)
real fruit and vegetables
empty boxes (small)
empty bags for groceries

Discussion: Talk about what mom and dad do when they go to the store...included describing various jobs of people connected to the store (e.g. cashier, stock boys, baggers, truck drivers who supply the food etc.)

Method: Present the prop box to the group and briefly review some of the items in it... show them where the prop box is stored making sure they realize it is available for use during free play period.

Further Suggestions: After they set up assigned roles, and played for a while they incorporated a 'house' theme with their 'shopping' one (an adult suggested possibility...they reassigned roles so that everyone shared in both themes - one person donned two roles... e.g. the cashier became the dad...)

Beauty/Barber Shop

Props: two large round makeup mirrors
pair of "scissors" that do not cut...actually they are disposable "stitch removers" obtained from a hospital
easy to use snap/sponge rollers
clips and bobby pins
hair net
broken hair dryer
combs and brushes
play makeup and empty, clean nail polish bottles filled with colored water
washable used wigs (available on a regular basis from a senior citizen home)
empty shaving cream container and empty plastic razor
towels
large bib
empty plastic spray containers
brushes and towels for shining shoes

Discussion: Review of the various job opportunities available in both the beauty and barber shops (e.g. hairdresser, barber, receptionist, shoe-shine guy, person who washes your hair, etc.)

Method: (Same as mentioned above)

Further Suggestions: This theme was handled very well with the children and the only intervention involved the use of makeup with the boys (the girls complained until we discussed how actors, clowns, and most television personalities use makeup).

Spaceship

Props: empty ice cream barrels
magic markers
large box
steering wheel
flat board with flip light switches, chain door lock, doorbell button, battery operated buzzer
goggles
football helmet
flashlight

Discussion: It included reading a book about astronauts and the various types of spaceships that have been used from the "Appolo" ships to the "shuttles." Use of a video-recorder provided edited shots of the take-off and landing of the Shuttle craft. Also, a couple of space scenes from Carl Sagan's series Cosmos were viewed.

Method: (Same as mentioned previously)

Further Suggestions: Adult suggested a few props (e.g. food containers) and an extension of roles for the astronauts (e.g. Captain, Scientists, Doctor, Ground Control Person). Adult participated in play during the first episode as "NASA Ground Control"...this allowed for a great deal of freedom to suggest problems for the crew to solve.

Although these children were already exhibiting a good deal of sociodramatic play before the introduction of the theme boxes, the results of this study confirmed the latest research that this type of play can be extended and enriched through adult intervention. A comparative analysis of themes observed in the initial three weeks (with children using only those props that they themselves created) to the same themes in the final three weeks (with children using the prop boxes and other adult suggestions) indicated that the duration of each theme-related play period was lengthened after intervention. The following is a brief breakdown which includes (a) the theme, (b) the week, (c) the average duration of play and (d) how often the play occurred during each week:

Week	Grocery	Beauty/Barber	Spaceship
1	10 minutes (2x's)	6 minutes (1x)	15 minutes (4x's)
2	14 minutes (1x)	20 minutes (1x)	15 minutes (2x's)
3	5 minutes (1x)	10 minutes (2x's)	25 minutes (5x's)
4	40 minutes (2x's)	0	10 minutes (1x)
5	0	45 minutes (4x's)	0
6	25 minutes (1x)	60 minutes (1x)	30 minutes (3x's)

Caregivers who are interested in extending sociodramatic play episodes should keep in mind the following recommendations by Griffing (1981):

"1. Set the stage for play by having long enough periods for children to plan and carry out ideas...also, reduce the number of activities available during free play in order that there will be less distraction and greater involvement in dramatic play.

   a. Create and supply centers of interest with props to encourage sociodramatic play (see Caregiver's Guide in Appendices for further suggestions in this area...) prepare the children using stories, books, and discussions for the play themes they have chosen...introduce new themes gradually and use adult participation for modeling roles you wish the children to play.

2. Space and Equipment include:

   a. The need for Housekeeping and Block areas in which dramatic play is most likely to occur..,both require continual attention and planning...

b. The need to examine all interest areas weekly (if not daily) and question if the children are using them to become involved in dramatic and constructive ways...if not, what could be done to make them more inviting and more likely to support sociodramatic play?

c. The need to locate the dramatic play areas in space where room has been divided into smaller play areas...

d. The need to help the children integrate one familiar to them (e.g. "Playing House") with another (e.g. "Playing House" and Grocery Store" combined).

3. Props:

a. Bender (1981) suggests collecting props in cardboard boxes for various themes...

b. Stacker (1978) proved the effectiveness of systematic provision of theme related props...found that preschool children provided each week with theme-related materials (for five weeks doubled the amount of imaginative play they engaged in...)

4. Teacher/Caregiver Role includes supporting play activities that are based on the children's interests and experiences...providing a stage set for play with time, space, and materials... relatively little is needed in the way of adult involvement because the role is primarily that of a resource person who can help solve problems, provide props, and offer occasional suggestions. If more direct involvement by an adult is needed, research has provided further clues as to what some direct procedures to encourage this play might include:

a. Introduction to the theme during several sessions.

b. Direct encouragement for certain children to take certain roles.

c. Actually adopt a role and play with the children..." (p. 16-19)

As a final note, it is most important to phase out adult involvement in the child's sociodramatic play. It is better to begin with a less structured approach (as was used in this study) and move to more direct involvement if it proves necessary. The children in this study needed very little direct involvement on the part of the caregiver (only the "spaceship" theme called for actual role modeling and that was only for the first five minutes) to extend their themes. It proved much more appropriate and effective to indirectly enrich the quality and duration of the play episodes by introducing new props and vocabulary to extend the themes they had already chosen.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Children need care and when parents are not available for certain periods of time someone else must provide this care. If a parent of a preschool child has no partner, friends or relatives who will take over the caregiving function then he/she needs a play group, nursery school or day care situation which will accommodate the individual needs of their child. "Family Day Care" enables a caregiver to provide for children in his/her own home. The setting may be much like a family offering an opportunity for a close relationship to develop between child and caregiver. Smart, Smart (1978) insist that "Day care that is merely custodial is not acceptable...developmental or quality care includes an educational program along with meeting a child's physical needs, promoting his physical and motor development, and keeping him safe and secure." (p. 256)

The preschool age child (three to five years) is no longer considered a baby. He interacts with an expanding world of people and things. His personality development is dramatic during this period and the two threads which dominate the fabric of personality growth are his/her sense of autonomy (seeing self as an individual separate from others) and a growing sense of initiative (drive to push out and explore). Upon a foundation of trust the child

increases his autonomy and initiative and the success of preschool interactions determines the adequacy of initiative and imagination he builds upon. Smart, Smart (1978) support the fact that "...the initiative and imagination grow as the child explores the world of people and things, as he imagines himself into a variety of roles and activities, and as he successfully seeks reasons, answers, solutions, and new ideas..." (p. 1)

The family day care home developed as a result of this project emphasizes the caregiver's role as that of providing not only the basic necessities (food, shelter, social and emotional support), but also displays a concern for cognitive growth in the young child. Piaget's theory formed the basis for this cognitively oriented day care program stressing the development of intelligence as an organized whole rather than a fragmented list of skills to be learned. Its design is one which facilitates the child's search for knowledge and acquisition of concepts through activity. Piaget contends that the young child actively seeks information about his/her world best through play experiences, hence the need for an enriched environment which encourages playful exploration. The physical setting (whether at home or in school) determines how much the child will play. Arrangements of space and materials may or may not afford valuable learning opportunities for pretend play, cooperative block building, and creative expression of self through art materials.

In their discussion concerning the topic of play, authors Stapleton, Ebon (1981) describe the adult's role as "one who helps

by putting pieces where a child can reach them or suggests ways they can be used...however, once a child begins to play, it becomes his world arranged to suit his needs... By bringing things together in ways that please him, straightening and arranging pieces and parts, a child discovers new ideas and adds them to what he already knows...physical development occurs naturally during the active use of his body while playful manipulation of objects are the basis of creativity and invention (mental development) later on..." (p. 4-6) They continue on to state how learning takes place during play: "Play develops interest and talents in solving problems...the child sets up a problem and solves it without adult praise or approval, they find pleasure in completing the task itself." (p. 9) Parents, teachers and caregivers cannot force intellectual development in the child. However, they can structure the environment (not the play itself) in ways that will encourage the child to play. Learning will be a natural response to the child's various interactions with the environment.

The goal of this project (the design of a playful learning environment for preschoolers within a family day care home) was achieved. Its success was determined by the overwhelming positive response to the program. Both the children and their parents are very enthusiastic about the type of care presently being offered and have expressed the hope that it will be continued beyond the completion of the thesis. Parents often state how anxious their child is to come and how they often do not want to leave when

it is time for them to go. Perhaps the best evidence of success was a statement made by a neighbor child to his mother when repeatedly asking her if it was his day to go "visit Mrs. Parr." He insisted "I have to go there today because she really lets us play!"

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APPENDIX A

PLAY INVENTORY

Play Inventory
(Based on Christie's Form)

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

Age: _____

Elements of Sociodramatic Play

___ Imitative Role Play
___ Make-believe in regard to objects
___ Make-believe in regard to action or situations
___ Interaction
___ Verbal Communication
___ Persistence

Intervention: ___ none
___ inside
___ outside

Description: _____
_____
_____

Child's Reaction: _____
_____
_____

Length of play period: _____

Estimated length of time play extended: _____

APPENDIX B

Children's Bi-Weekly Evaluation Form

Purpose:

To provide a caregiver with information concerning the children he/she cares for on a regular basis.

Procedure:

Every two weeks the caregiver will informally ask each child the following questions. The results will be used by the careperson to assess whether or not the program is meeting each child's individual needs.

Questions:

1. Do you like to come to my home?
2. What is your favorite room in my house?
3. Why do you like this room better than another?
4. How would you like to arrange this room (e.g. Family Room) so that it would be more fun to play in?
5. Is there anything that you would like to play or do here that we haven't done yet?
6. Are there any children you like better than others who come here?
7. Are there any children you have a hard time getting along with while you are here?
8. Are there any "rules" you would like to make?
9. Are there any "rules" you would like to change?
10. Do you like the food/snacks that are served?

APPENDIX C

Yearly Parent Evaluation Form

Purpose:

To provide a caregiver with "feedback" from the children's parents about her program.

Procedure:

Once a year the caregiver will request the parents to fill out the questionnaire below. The questions should be answered anonymously and mailed back in a self-addressed envelope which the careperson provides.

Questions: (Note: Some will be graded on a scale of 1-4 with 1 as the lowest and 4 as the highest rating.)

1. How would you rate the Family Day Care Program your child/children are participating in? 1 2 3 4
2. How do you feel your child would rate the program? 1 2 3 4
3. Are there any activities or features you would like to see provided to your child that are not presently offered? If so, what?

4. What area of the day care home appealed the most to you?
   ___ Kitchen
   ___ Family Room
   ___ Play Room
   ___ Outside

   Why?

5. Do you feel that the caregiver offers a variety of activities and enough stimulating play materials to encourage learning in your child/children?
6. How "comfortable" is your child with his/her caregiver? 1 2 3 4
7. How concerned does your caregiver seem to be about your child's growth and development? 1 2 3 4
8. How satisfied are you as a parent with the caregiver's behavior toward you and your children? 1 2 3 4
9. Do you have any suggestions for improvement in caregiver behavior, philosophy of the program, or home environment?

APPENDIX D

WHAT I DID TODAY! __/__/__

NAME_____

HOURS_____

TODAY'S ACTIVITIES WERE...

MORNING FREE PLAY Approx.Time__-__

MENU: SNACK Approx.Time__-__

LUNCH Approx.Time__-__

SNACK Approx.Time__-__

PLANNED ACTIVITY Approx.Time__-__

AFTERNOON FREE PLAY Approx.Time__-__

OBSERVATIONS

APPENDIX E

A SURVEY OF DAY CARE PREFERENCES

I am currently a graduate student at Oakland University working on a thesis which will complete the requirements for a Masters Of Arts In Teaching. My project proposal is the design of a preschool program which is conducted in the home environment rather than in a center or school. This program will concentrate on facilitating a child's cognitive growth and development through play. It will provide a variety of materials and activities that will stimulate such growth.

Your assistance in the completion of this survey will help to establish a need within our community for this type of "Family Day Care". If you currently have children living at home, of any age group, your responses to the applicable questions below would be greatly appreciated.

1. How many children do you have currently living at home?_____
   Please list them by their ages_____

IF NONE OF YOUR CHILDREN ARE UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE PLEASE STOP AT THIS POINT AND RETURN THIS SURVEY TO THE DESK IN THE VESTIBULE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

2. Do you have a child (or children), three to five years old, currently enrolled in:
   - [ ] Preschool Center
   - [ ] Family Home Day Care (a person providing day care in their own home for your children)
   - [ ] Baby Sitter (in your home)
   - [ ] Other _____

3. If you could choose between either of the following programs, which would you prefer:
   - [ ] A formal, structured learning program.
   - [ ] An informal, play-orientated learning program.

4. Which type of setting would you prefer for your child(ren)?
   - [ ] A Non-home environment (a nursery school, co-op, etc.)
   - [ ] A Family-home environment (a person caring for your children in their own home)

   Why?

5. If you prefer an informal play orientated program (from question #3) and a family home environment (from question #4) would you pay:
   - [ ] $1.50-$2.00/hr.(typical Family Day Care rate)
   - [ ] $2.00-$2.25/hr.
   - [ ] $2.25-$2.50/hr.(typical "center" rate)
   - [ ] Somewhat more than $2.50 (if the quality of care was perceived as being superior to any other available)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION! PLEASE BE SURE TO RETURN THIS FORM TO THE VESTIBULE OF THE CHURCH.

Sincerely,
Carolyn M. Parr

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APPENDIX F

Appendix 6

CAREGIVER'S GUIDE TO FACILITATE PLAY IN VARIOUS INTEREST AREAS

The following recommendations are designed to provide the caregiver with a variety of ideas on how to enhance a preschool child's play in the following interest areas: I. Table Toy Center II. Housekeeping Center III. Block Center IV. Art Center. It includes reasons why each center is important to the development of the child, how the center might be arranged (including some design suggestions which might alleviate frustrating problems for both the caregiver and children), some basic props and possible rules for the children to follow which will allow them the freedom to play without infringing on the rights of others. Many of these suggestions are adapted from ideas expressed by Creative Associates Inc. (1979) and were the result of a workshop funded by DHEW entitled "Celebration In Learning".

TABLE TOY CENTER:

Table toys are defined as toys and games that a child plays with relatively quietly while sitting down. It includes items such as puzzles, sewing cards, shape boxes, nesting materials, dominos, Legos, Tinker toys, small blocks, Lincoln Logs, beads and string, peg boards etc. They develop small muscles, skills in problem solving, and eye/hand coordination. They help to teach a variety of concepts (color, number, size, and shape), can be used alone or with others and providing independent successful experiences.

Grouping of table toys:

1) According to the senses a child uses when working with it.
2) According to the type of toy it is: structured (toy works one way) or open-ended (toy that can be used in several different ways.)
3) According to what concepts or skills may be learned from the toy (e.g. color, shape, size, order etc.)
4) According to the label given to the toy (e.g. "Dramatic Play Table Toys" which include small people, animals, furniture,

cars etc.)

Location of Table Toy Interest Area:

1) Away from any noisy areas.
2) Have storage area for the toys near the play area so child doesn't get distracted and wander away from his task.
3) May be on a table or the floor. (boundaries may be designated by using masking tape on the floor or rug squares to define areas)
4) Include toys that have all the pieces in good condition... missing pieces may be frustrating to the young child.

Caregiver's Role:

1) To offer to observe the young child at play.
2) To offer help to the child when it is needed...it often includes "breaking down" a task into smaller steps.
3) Talking to the child about what he is doing in the area. It includes using non-judgemental descriptions of the play. (eg. Instead of saying "That's good" you might say "You put the whole puzzle together yourself!"
4) Find one sentence to say to each child in the area that mentions at least one of these concepts: color, shape, size, number, in/out/top/bottom/ between, same or different... the child will know then that you are really looking at his work.

Suggestions:

1) Find and arrange space for toys.
2) Select and display materials.
3) Set rules for the area and enforce them consistently.
4) Support the children by talking with them, encouraging them, and teaching them skills when appropriate.
5) Rotate toys in the area so the children do not become bored.

6) Extend a child's play with a toy by inviting further exploration with it. (eg. "Can you make a tower with three purple cubes and one blue one?")

HOUSEKEEPING CENTER:

The "House Center" is an area designed to resemble a home giving children a) a place to interact with other children in social situations, b) a place to experiment with other people's roles (eg. mother, father, sister, brother, baby, doctor, bus driver etc.), c) a place to act out emotional needs, and d) a place to use their imagination for fantasy play. Play in this area develops the child both physically (his physical enactments of different roles help him to understand different aspects of the job), and intellectually (as the child moves from using real objects to increasingly abstract symbols...dramatic play is the one way children begin to handle and understand symbols). Dramatic play in this area also gives the child a chance to work through emotionally charged situations...sometimes, the recreation of a happy or unhappy experience helps him to fix it more firmly in his memory, allowing for him to gradually understand it better. Constant repetition of play (particularly a frightening episode) seems to ease the tension and gradually the experience becomes less frightening. Supporting children in fantasy play helps them to build their own interests and curiosity, to feel confident about their own thoughts, to be resourceful, and to come up with new ideas.

Room Arrangement:

1) A person walking into the room should be able to see clearly where the housekeeping area (or any center) is. If the room is confusing to an adult it will certainly be confusing to a child...a room clearly defined becomes a room that makes sense and the child will feel more secure because he/she will know what to do and where to do it. Also, if the area is defined and separate, materials will be more likely to stay in the area they belong in.
2) The area should be enclosed and not open to the whole room. Enclosed areas tend to restrain the children from running around because they can only go so far before running into a barrier. Also, some children

who "act out" calm down easier in a more enclosed space because it seems cozier and more secure.

3) The House Area should be located near other noisy areas (eg. the block area)...it should not be near the table toys or book area where children are trying to concentrate.
4) The House Area should be cozy and inviting with a wide variety of household equipment.
5) Items in the area should be organized...if the area is messy it gives the child the message that the adult doesn't care and it's alright to be messy. One idea is to use stick on labels (using words or pictures over doors, cupboards, wall hooks that show where things belong.

Basic Props:

-dress-up clothes
-dishes and silver
-pots, pans, cooking utensils
-doll and doll clothes
-empty food containers
-plastic fruit
-pocket books, wallets, keys
-suitcases

Other Ideas:

-table cloth on table
-tape a curtain over a picture of an outside scene onthe wall if a real window is not available
-try to divide house into two areas (bedroom and kitchen)
-put flowers on the table and pictures on the wall at children's eye level.
-rug scraps make nice carpeting which contributes to a cozier setting

Caregiver's Role:

1) Provide a space for the house.
2) Provide props. (note. a sink, stove, refrigerator. washer and dryer can all be made out of boxes.)
3) Arrange for field trips or outside experiences to introduce children to themes other than "House".
4) To sometimes take an acive part in dramatic play to model roles for the children.
5) To change or introduce new materials in the center...when children begin to abuse or misuse the center it may be that they are bored.

Suggestions For Themes:

-Supermarket
-Beauty Parlor/Barber Shop
-Shoe Store
-Laundromat
-Gas Station
-Doctor's Office
-Post Office
-Library
-Print Shop
-Office
-United States President
-Garbage Collector
-Hospital
-Dentist Office
-Car Wash
-Pizza Parlor
-Restaurant
-Mobile Home
-Policeman
-Fireman
-Rodeo
-School

BLOCK CENTER:

An open area that is supplied with a variety of different size unit blocks the children use to construct or build large buildings, cities, zoos etc. Using blocks encourages the child to learn about math concepts (weight, height, balance, measurement), shapes, new words, matching, and patterns. It develops visual

memory, concept understanding (same/different, tall/short, over/under) and both large and small muscles. Children gain a great deal of satisfaction out of playing with blocks because of the powerful feeling they get when they have created something out of them. By reconstructing the real world out of blocks children are given the opportunity to dramatize and learn different roles.

Stages in block building:

1) Child carries the blocks around.
2) The blocks are piled up (tower) or lay flat (road).
3) New ways to connect blocks are developed: This is the first part of construction for three and four year olds who are used to playing with blocks. It includes a) enclosures (an enclosed space), b) bridging, and c) decorative patterns with a sense of balance.
4) Naming of structures which involves using them for dramatic play.

Location of block center:

1) Placed in an area out of the "line of traffic" in the room.
2) Not near a tables or chairs.
3) Not in a "quiet area".
4) Not in an area that is too small.
5) On indoor/outdoor carpeting is ideal because the blocks stand up well and it is not too cold.

Caregiver's Role:

1) Provide appropriate space.
2) Provide an ample supply of blocks.
3) Set rules for limiting the number of children in the area.
4) Providing a means to get children started on block play which might include such ideas as:
   -inviting them to build with you
   -letting them watch for awhile before asking

them to join in
-describing what you are doing with words

5) Providing encouragement when looking at children's constructions...avoid words like "nice" and "great" instead ask direct questions about the building... describe what you see to the child, which blocks were used, how many of them, if they are the same or different, what you like about the design, how they are connected and balanced... All of that will let the child know that you value his building and are really looking carefully at it. It will also provide him with new vocabulary and draw his attention closer to what he actually did.
6) Extending block building by getting down on the floor with a child who is frustrated and offer encouragement while he/she solves the problem, offering new shapes "that might help", new accessories etc.

Suggestions:

1) "Preserve" a building by either drawing or taking a picture of it...it lets the child know you value his work even though it must come down.
2) Place the photos in an area where everyone can see them... it may activate the interest of others in building.
3) Keep the pictures of each child's constructions over the period of a few months and you will have a visual record of a child's development.
4) Encourage clean up by giving each child a "ticket" with a particular block shape on it... the child is to pick up all the blocks of that shape.

ART CENTER:

Art activities are fun for the preschooler and can be the source of a great deal of learning. It encourages perceptual and motor development while introducing children to new materials and experiences. It often leads to a great deal of language development and socialization. Most importantly, it gives children a chance to use their imagination, express their individuality, and be creative while they are having fun. Their creativity grows from using their imagination, making choices and trying out their own ideas in a free atmosphere, and developing their own sense of what is "beautiful".

Location of Art Center:

1) It should be removed as far away from other centers as is possible.
2) It should be in an area that is practical (eg. near the sink, easy to clean, attractive).
3) Storage of supplies should be nearby and set up so the children are encouraged to function as independently as possible.
4) Are the table and chairs washable and will they accomodate different size children?

Materials Needed:

1) Things to write or draw with (pencils, pens, markers, crayons etc.)
2) Paper to draw on.
3) Something that holds paper together (glue, paste, tape)
4) Clay or Play-do.
5) Scissors

Things to Consider:

1) Use water-based markers that are easier to clean up after.
2) Use good crayons because the cheaper ones use more wax and the color is not as intense... it may be frustrating and less rewarding for the children.
3) Alternate colored paper when giving children a choice...it will be easier for them to get the color they want.
4) Keep clay or play-do in an airtight container so it will stay soft.

Caregiver's Role:

1) Consider certain guidelines before setting out material:
   - -How old are the children?
   - -How much previous experience with the material have they had?
   - -Are the children quiet or over-active that day?
   - -What can they already use successfully?
   - -Do they have trouble sharing or waiting their turn?
   - -Are they frustrated with too many choices?
   - -Can they work on their own well?
   - -Is everything washable and non-toxic?
   - -Is equipment (eg. easles, paintbrushes, markers) in good condition?
   - -Are the art smocks easy to reach and easy for the children to put on?
   - -Is the sink made accessible to everyone (eg. have a sturdy stool or chair available for children to stand on as most kitchen sinks are too high for them to use properly?
   - -Is there an area for drying, displaying and storing of finished products?
   - -Is there enough time available for a certain project?
2) To Foster Creativity in the child by:
   - -allowing for some choice in each art activity (the older the child, the more choices offered.
   - -allowing plenty of time for exploration of art material without necessarilty "making anything".
   - -being flexible how the material is used as long as the child is not destructive.
   - -remembering that it is the process and not the product that is important.

-discussing the child's work in a non-judgemental way using descriptive rather than qualitative statements.

3) To have already tried an activity yourself before presenting it to the children.
4) To be available and willing to work with the children on a project...don't do it for them but offer other possibilities they might try.
5) To be a good observer: should know the needs of the children and be sensitive to their needs on a particular day.

Suggestions:

1) Put out fewer choices of materials but have more of them so there will be less of a wait.
2) If possible divide supplies into individual portions.
3) Make sure each child has enough room to work in so he won't disturb others.
4) Ask open-ended questions about the children's work (eg. "Did you enjoy doing that?" or "How did you do that?")
5) If there is not enough time to allow the child to finish his project try to be flexible about letting him finish it later.

"Environmental" Educational Art:
Whitney, (1975)

1) Gather weeds, grass, leaves, wood, and other natural items to glue onto paper or cleaned out meat tray.
2) Sand: -color it with colored powered tempra paint
-sprinkle glue design on paper
-sprinkle sand on paper and let dry
3) Plants: - use as crayons(many yield a natural dye)
4) Textured Surfaces: -make a

crayon rub-
bing using
the flat
side of the
crayon.